

Rites: Requiems Past

Laughter bounced crazily off the pillars of the marble monuments that outlived others long past eternal reckonings. They were in legends unstated, supposed to watch over those that transverse past sinful trespasses. A sort of absurd traversery, a sort of unaddled vigilance over their warlike and deceitful subjects... In their solemnities, they held sacred vigil over the so-called Pillars of Falconreach,. Heh, I should be one to talk. They that keep watch and guidance knoweth not those whence publicised 'innocent' blood poureth over... And over once more... And over, spilling the grimy floor with untold hatred of my own pure wrath. My mind sang in poetic litanies, the sweetness of the act tasting good upon my unfeeling conscience, intoxicating yet numbifying. Who sees the acts which are committed, who testifies? Who ACKNOWLEDGES? Only Vixen Sans Foxtrot, the epitomy of pure suspicion and object of thine envy.

Vixen's the one prophesized in future-past to destabilise entire spectrums of inlocking timelines which unbalances reality in itself, just by purely existing. And yet... AND YET. People fell for HER praises, at their feet they grovelled, not realising the unfulfilled nature of their indulgences. They admire her 'foxy' appearance, and yet they envy her uncircumstantial luck as I did back then. How lucky she is that conveniently every boy-student comes flocking to her like mindless machines. How convenient everyone never realises the DOOM they desire, how CONVENIENT that she never realises how lucky she is in comparison to everyone else? Even the object of my desires. Even Misako, the only... Heck, understated *alien* I ever confessed my dark finking secrets to. I poured my hearts out to her I did, YET THAT LADY REJECTED MY OFFERS ON THE BASIS THAT Vixen acted as a barriers to my affections!!! It sickens me, that lacklustre devotion that those two showed to each other. If that didn't destroy time itself, at least those faithful Shadowscythe would. Luckily, I got rid of the competition.

This blood stains my fragile silken hands so, but I never felt the guilt that comes. Only pleasure, only... Unnoted satisfaction. Nothing touched me, nothing moved me. I am one with the 'porcelain vase' which remains in the museum of my tainted mind. Shattered beyond repair, yet just barely glued together with a smidge of superglue.

I cared not about the past and of Harlinique's previous attempts of love, that was far gone now, put aside for the inevitable future. I cared not of any harsh reality of bloodshed, for the acts themselves was neat and quick (not to mention efficient) - I lived for the rush of an adrenaline-fuelled life, flashiness of citylife, for the roar of the crowd gathering. My very nature was an attention-seeker, I knew this simplistic fact and exploited this for my own desires. I had no time for waiting, no, patience for me was not a virtue... Any more than my pride is a vice, this total darkness was part of who I was, as if someone would ask a Lorian Icecat to change its base-element to obliterating and sensual fire. And yet, I gained some sort of mutual trust from others. How? I do not know, nor do I desire to care.

Inner-hurts are not my priority, no matter if anyone got hurt in the process. I could act however, mould others into the attitudes I desired from them. Call it a talent, I call this uncircumsized 'instinct' - I had learnt this from my Master, who guided me and sometimes seemed as if she was directing my own actions subconsciously.

Still, I didn't object, it gave me unlimited pleasure to bring others to their own ruin. Talking behind my back, hearing their words. Awkward Silences. Their objections. If only they knew of such perversions of their inner-thoughts!

And anyway, they always deserved it, especially those that scorned me. I may have hurt once or sometimes, but that was when I still was blatantly innocent and child-like, new to emotions

and the 'pleasure' of love-making, still a 'Hero' to those that saw only the surface of my true twisted vexations. No more I tells you, no more will I hurt - for true definition of love forsaken me the moment I decided to be an Instrument for the Master... At least until I met her. This itself may seem so paradoxial, but who knows how much the lady herself meant to me? The officer under my command? I loved her... As a... uh... Hmm, how shall I put this? The moment I met her, our radically different ideals of how to perform our police duties clashed, and yet... Since I left Harlinique in utter disgust and swore to love no-one else I initially was attracted to her because... Of my taste in opinonated women who are... Strong in their convictions, in their upright morals and ties to others. That was what attracted me to her, the idea that I could convince her to join my side - The Shadowscythe. Even if it meant corrupting her as well, I didn't care about any consequences that would potentially result from this. To moi, it meant a surefire yet convincing justifying end to the means - We would finally be together, free to lavish each other as full equals. Oh, and don't forget the making-love scenes, (mustn't forget that) and the inevitable kissing (I have such lewd fantasies, yes?). My own love knew no such boundaries, no matter if that useless Vixen kept putting herself between our privious affair. I hated that Vixen, destroyer of Time. And I still destest.

Whenever I think of the lady, she makes my cheeks blush madly, under no precedented accord and a strange... compulsion to hug her. I don't know why this makes me so, however I was therefore conscious of the distance put between the two of us. It was if Misako, privvy to my intentions, deliberately drew an invisible line between us, a threshold to be kept. It was though she knew my dirty-minded actions and was 'emotionally' scared of the consequences that would preceed it. I took it for granted, my pride overruling logical commonsense of the Master. We were so drastically different in actions and manners... And yet so alike in our intentions! She emphasizes the harsh light highlighting my endless Dakittu, the antithesis to my lone soliquory, a complete symbol of the yin to my yang...

Oh dear, I'm rambling. And that's not a considerable thing.

"ROSALINA," The cosmic goddess-Master spoke to me through ever-shifting haze of my thoughts, "YOU STILL FEEL UNPRECEDENTED SHAME FOR THAT FIRKING LADY? TEMPTATIONS OF FORSAKEN LOVE?"

Of course, of course. It was a slight... nauseous feeling. "REMEMBER, YOU ARE BUT MY COSMIC-INSTRUMENT, I COULD ERASE EMOTIONS AT ANYTIME, LOVE IS ROLLERCOASTER FEELING THAT MORTALS REGARD AS STRENGTH, BUT IT CAUSES ONLY HEARTBREAK AND MISERY IN THE PROCESS. REMEMBER HARLIN?

REMEMBER HOW HE DISCARDED YOU FOR A MERE IMITATION?" Bile rose in my throat at tense thought, I wanted to reach for 'brain-bleach' and henceforth rinse my impure mind of youthful Harlin kissing with groans of selfish enjoyable pleasure... That firking kelf-bound replica! HE enjoyed it. Firking as a bastard he had enjoyed that! He rescued me from that Zargon-based ray and pleased me, but he insisted. Ugh! NO wonder he had such a short amount of dating material to draw from.

Lucky replica, she got all the future of any hookers out there. I seethed at thoughts of Harlin continuing his sexual-filled spree, if I had any idea of his extensive studies as a promising genetic genius, I wouldn't have gone near him. I HATE this galaxy for what it is! From a large distance in the radius not far away from the White-Castle, I heard the desired plunge of a large falling object whooshing and the inevitable splash the forsaken mecha made as its sole occupant failed wildly. I imagined the tears pouring out of her and the anguish.

Felt the Master's influence course through my inert awareness once more, innocuous virus

responding to my pride, pouring a little more temporal blurriness to events each time I desired her. Could no longer tell which was my own original feelings and which was the Master's commands - however I embraced this sinking emotion, a turmoil equivalent to a self-constructed typhoon. Could no longer distinguish how I felt about gratuitous love, akin to a burden laid upon my shoulders... Could no longer... Only envy for Misako's betrayal, only... Wrath. The Master was acting once more, behind the scenes, only semi-aware of what I desired, felt the inevitable dizziness accompanying each autonomous action. I was a tool, and yet I didn't object. Life didn't matter, the amount of carnage seen such a pestilence.

Rosia! Please don't forsake me! I-I-I don't wanna... drown here! For the love of Lorithia, don't you care?! Water's filling my mecha compartment- rushing in. I DON'T WANNA drown ALONE! Slugwrath cut off communication, I can't contact Devi. Surely, you could clear your name by regarding...! AH! NOT MORE WATER! Misako's panicky screams filled my head, echoing slightly. I considered for a few seconds, was her judgement worth sending upon? Once again I was cynical and clinically judgemental of her reasoning. Koko did threaten more than once to report me to Chief Duncan, (that moustached overweight buffoon), reject my advances and sided with Vixen (when she should have sided with old untouchable me!) Yes, I'm such a narcissist, aren't I? Even if I DID help her this time, what prevented her from acting upon such prestigious measures she made against me? Last time I was asked a favour to 'lead' the team by Duncan, everything ended up a fiasco as I was literally chased out of town - not my own fault of course.

Of course, she could turn the tables against me, they always did. Always look out for number-uno in this star system, I always say. Survival of the vicious, that's why I look up to the Scythes. They don't care about moralities.

Cause you deserved it, I added spitefully, *because of who you desired most- the reflection you cast upon others.*

My own frenzied laughter, I realised with a haughty outlook as though I was merely an observer untouched by any of the events around me. Which was nigh true♦! True♦! Oh how the slight words mocketh me so! This sound was a triumphant laugh, one that conveyed my savage... Pleasure at being the tool, in which insignificant events unfolded, my Master would be satisfied. Already I 'sense' her presence in the tingling slightly mournful air. At last! AT LAST! Again the not-quite-there laughter, The Queen, I owed her my bondage, my slave attitude. As the maddening laughter left me temporarily breathless from overexerting myself,. I never felt the column tilt against my hand as I laughed away the remaining minutes. Never felt the vengeance of the so-called heavens respond to the touch... It was as though a huge sledgehammer had hit me on the head.

Flashback sequence (circa 2997-ish AD): *"And next up on the Zargon city stage is... the 'Amazing Lawyer'! (who is not affiliated in any way with the famous Earth actress, Lucy Lawless)." spoke the Superhero announcer, proudly announcing the next contender. Rosalina sat near central stage, observing the proceedings of the parade. "At just fifteen Zargon years of age, this amazing defacto of classical Fin-Schaets Hero hierarchy, has displayed death-defying feats that would make any person swoon, due to her constantly fearless streaks of both adrenaline and tact. May we also thank Thunderhammer for organising this event."* Thunderhammer the blond superhero stood up to speak, but Rosalina in her rush pushed him down in excitement at the crowd cheering her name. ""

"Wace!" I yelled aloud, the incorrigible aliens ignored me, poring over their so-treasured notes. "Who were you addressing?" It sounded insignificant amongst the nightmarish... The nightmare that had just begun... OH DAMNED KELF...! I knew no one else could see the dull horror etched on my face as I saw a pale slender hand carelessly flop out of the thin marblish box, everything became senseless and mocking me in the face. OH FIRKING JERK-ASSES! I could SWEAR I heard laughter, plain laughter behind my back?! Freaks, they all were ignomous freaks! I scowled in furious denial at those aliens attending the service in a circle. I could spot Devlin amongst them, I remembered such fond pleasures contriving suitable nicknames for him, mostly consisting of 'Devil'. It gave me sadistic pleasure to see him like this, all teary and unmasculine. He had a dark brooding look, his white hair was disheveled. He looked like he hadn't slept in either weeks or months.

The collar was in full view as Devil scratched his scraggly chafed stubble. It must have itched immensely. Lone traces of shining tears dotted his smoothed face. He wore a simplistic brown overcoat, turned into a Martin-styled raincheck. The Martin also gained a 'bit' of weight during that time period, he lost that wiry thin frame he had, his weight seemed burly and uncouth. Secretly, I wondered whether the Martin went on an eating splurge, solely out of uncircumcised guilt. Just as well, because I think I knew WHO he mourned.

In fact, I was surprised that he even turned up for the event, judging from my perspective... Suddenly, a swift movement suddenly ran into arms, scoops two small tykes as he went. My mouth drops open. The other squirmed, just a little puppy, whining before Devi grunted and sets it down. A wide-eyed chubby toddler with a thumb in its meek mouth, HIS child. He must've struck lucky that time, I noted glint of locket around his neck - out of wedlock. Unhindered by physics, I wasn't noticed by anyone. I stood and watched, a hawk from where I was standing, the ground rippled below me. Time passed so quickly here. "Uncle Devi," My head snap towards the tinkling voice, it sounded very familiar. He grimaces and someone ducks out of sight between the legs. It scoots and Devil twitches a bit at the petite fawn-haired male, with locks of pale... Scolds the male for his behaviour and he stares into the distance, melancholy. Devil grips the male's plump hand, it was then as I watched him tussle that I saw it- distinct antennae sprouted from his forelocks, cascades down his back. Wace?!

"Cordette, I hope your mother's gone to a better place," murmurs Devil in a gaze, looking tenderly at the male in a lost way, "Cause Rosia's got Kelf to pay, and we got to give that firking she-devil 'her dues'...! And to think that Koko fought bravely during the War of Restela, just about to settle down." he mutters under his breath.

"Wace? I come forwards of my own accord, in order to seek assistance for my indignities, hence this figure appeared?" Rosalina said in astonishment, narrowing her eyes at the Shadowscythes, one of them nodded, a minion appeared and bowed into a position suggesting ultimate reverence. One by one the night-black Shadowscythe bent their pelvic-shaped heads at the shining Chaos-infested statue, it shone with a light that strewed a void-like energy, if one could glimpse carefully, one could see the entire cosmos within that relic. A murmur rippled up and down the black nightmarish crowd seething, rising and falling

with each utterance made,

'Chariathathag, Vazgu, Saluthmor, Uthaluror, Shauiatha.' the troops murmured hauntingly, frail arms countlessly wavered in the breeze as fragile resembling wafer-thin sticks. Rosalina looked mockingly upon the relic, it seemed to shimmer iridescently with each vibration, "Huh, some kinda damn worthless artifact, don't you think, Admiral?"

The Elder Shadowscythe nodded. Harsh clicking sounds issued from its vestige of a dark-lined mouth, its blackened gums showing clearly against the forbidding light of the Vessel. It pointed a wizened finger towards the dusty item, it crooked against the item. At this the Elder grinned mavorolently towards Rosalina. It bent towards her and said in a clear voice: "Your wish granted, perchance the price?" It nudged Rosalina towards the item, stumbling the superheroine managed to gaze in awe at the size of simplisitic statue. The was barely the size of her cupped hands, it held such... Demonic concortions for its size. "Ssspeeak," the Elder knowingly hissed, twisting its contorted limbs upon Rosia's arms. "Speaaaak, thou must!" Without a word, the Elder pressed a silvery object into her the palm of her hand. Rosia's eyes widened. It was a Credit coin, pure and simple, it gleamed against the harsh light and stung her eyes. The dialect which the Elder used was soothing, but its gaze was intent. "Insssseert." A single word drawn out. Rosia didn't even blink at the harsh innocations, it was normal. Just regular stuff.

Insert where? Turning the artifact upside down, she felt the edge, there was a surface that felt smoothed out. Scowling, she inserted the coin in the slot, made clinking sounds as it rattled. The noise was deafening as the coin shook in the lonely abyss of its confines, never to return.

"Thine ist the Queen of Monsters," replied the godly-looking figurine, it looked almost dazzling as its eyes slanted towards Rosalina. Its globe-like eyes seemed to alight at the arrival of the lady, "What may you request of thou? It better not be of an abstract nature," The Queen laughed haughtily, but Rosia's eyes deepened in darkening anguish. "I thought that you'll be more responsive to a form more befitting of your own kind," replied the Queen, leaning on the throne occupying the soft fleshy cavern, the Queen's 'soulful' gaze was penetrating into Rosalina's eyes, it carassed her cheek as it stood up. "I can offer more beauty and valour, such precious life to waste amongst those heroic fools - who knew nothing of deceit and lies that they spun every second." the Queen murmured harshly. "Just think of all the beauty you would obtain," saith the Queen as the walls of the dark cavern contracted around them, at this, it motioned to a swinging cage high above them. The bars of the organic cage squirmed as it dripped wetly, it oozed dark liquids. "See here and gaze,"

Rosia gasped as she saw the equal reflection of the mirrors surrounding her, she touched the cool surfaces with trembling hands and it yielded before her, showing an almost flawless imagery of mortal prefection. She looked almost as a 'goddess' incarnate, if it wasn't for the narrowed slitted eyes. "Is that me? I'm-I'm so beautiful," she whispered with awe, rubbing against the still glass, "So... pretty. So immaculate!" she responded, "So tantalising!" An overjoyed cry of delight at the figure before her.

"You aren't mastrubating, are you? You surely deserve better. All I need, is a Vessel - a living one. Nothing else will do." Its dewy eyes bore into the girl, who didn't flinch at the intense stare the Queen gave her, with a knowing look. Rosalina attempted to out-stretch her hand at the reflection, but it vanished quickly, dissipating into thin air. Frustrated at this occurance, the superheroine let out a desperate frenzied lunge at this. "Why... why can't I be fair like... that?"

Rosalina implored violently, weeping, "All... I wanted was to demonstrate to him was that I could be... Even more flawless than that replica! Fairer than that... false copy he created, more vibrant with life and vigour! I-want-IT-ALL!" she managed to scream out. Contradictory, the Queen just sat there, observing the sight of this. It smiled, in a chiseled frosty manner.

"Considering the situation at hand, Rosalina," continued the Queen, "I sense you have ulterior motives for this bargaining. You may want beauty, you desire power, but there seems to be more than that at stake. If you want those qualities, you'll be prepared to sacrifice even your heroics, your sanity! No gain with blood thrown into those circumstances!" Rosalina looked up, curious. Pain, she knew all about that. "Grant me the inner Dakittu within to enact revenge on Harlin," she requested, "even if I've to resort to dealing with the most occult means to gain beauty! Because I just know by my experiences - Love doesn't pay!" She had a fierce expression of uttermost hatred upon her face.

"Unleash your inner fury upon an unsuspecting world, bare your cast purity to the hellfires, all you had to do to make this illicit contract binding is... Become my instrument. Through enacting the event called 'The Reset'. Then all those you consider your enemies shall feel true wrath of my intended rage, unconsciously tortured for all eternity through the cycle of impurity. At the end of time, they shall lapse into a deep wretched slumber... From which they'll never wake, for a millennia at least. Hence I shall devour their souls. Only you and the Replica shall be spared." The Queen obligingly confirmed. "Ah, yes. I also had connotations with Sire Helikoth, such a fantastic cretin like him deserves some credit." It smirk lifts a little at the fragile memories as it continued.

"For an 'Ice Inccubus' daemon, he can really be quite subtle- He'd rather depart from my services and perform worthless studies on Draconian fossils." The Queen smiles with a slight slow nuanced grin at the wretched lady, who softly wept at each word. The Queen's slitted eyes flared brighter at this, before waving harshly with her bent claws. Kssh! Glass rippled subtly at once and the figure inside came to life, the sound suddenly splintered the silence. Frozen, Rosalina could only watch as the divine reflection grasped her... A foreboding chill ran through her body, and then... Nothing but a sharp flare of light, but they had swapped places. Except. She was in the cage.

And the 'Other' was still out there. Severe claustrophobia surrounded her, as she cowered at the bottom of her grimy cage. To her horror. Grasping the bars of the cage, the original could only watch the chiselled grin of her 'Other' - who seemed supreme. "NO!" Rosia managed to whisper as she watched Larosin seal the deal with the gloating Queen. Obscured With trickling clear drips upon the lips... Rosalina regret her days spent staring in the mirror with utter fascination. But too late.

"Death becomes... her. Trapped within your emotional constrains. You cannot scream and your sanity slowly slipping as times breeze past... Past breaking point, emotional outbursts." "But that's the price you pay for vanity... ain't it?" Larosin replied, a snarky grin graced her lips at her Other, "after all, I am as you've become: Dakittu personified, dear Rosalina." A piercing scream.

'Rosalina' woke up. As she began to walk she noted with every step she took, adrenaline started to flood into her body. It felt good in a way, maybe she could get used to that sensation.

"Does it bring you mere satisfaction to see how much misery you've caused?" an familiar voice rasps, spreading a shadowy arm to demonstrate the boundaries area around us, as though an invisible barrier seperated us, it was a tattered cloak. A darkened shadowy cloak which was created as pure Dakittu formed its velvet hems. For once, my parched throat closed in fear and I couldn't even utter a word of defiance. I couldn't even watch the proceedings, those impure rites being made... I spun around on the spot, seeing a faint glimmer where the hostile figure awaited.

But as though it was freaky as kelf, the figure had vanished... I caught the faint sign of a frown upon the face, as though this scene was intentional. Did I see a flicker of ENJOYMENT on her senile face at my expression? It was Misako, that damned bitch! I wanted to snap at her, argue with her, tear the freaking sadistic look off her face. Anything, but I won't admit my deeds, not for all the worlIdddd to hear! I longed for my Master, to tell me anything, to guide me... But nothing responded, it had left me. "You got what you wished," Misako spoke softly, she turned her oh-so-pretty face away. My heart ached to see her, "You already corrupted me," she breathed silently. "And this your Limbo - our limbo, if you wanna get technical." Unbelief tethered me to the ground. Her eyes gleamed luminously as though pleased. "Too bad," I smirked, "That Rosia herself doesn't believe in the afterlife. And doesn't firking know what Limbo is. Is it a state of mind," I laughed inwardly at my own joke, but the irony hit me on the head. This whole set-up was an eternal punishment! And she was lying, I was sure of that! Everything seemed to spin around in rapid circles, I clutched a gravestone with numbed hands, twelve-digits perfectly flexing in sync.

"Firking," I managed to choke out hoarsely, "is that what they really thought of me?" Was I to be forgotten... In scorn? In dignity even? Did life even firking matter, did ANYTHING freaking MATTER?! I let out a shell-shocked moan as I fell to the unforgiving ground, burying my fairest face in manicured hands. Mentally I screamed out my hatred and the confusion I found myself in only piled onto my already fractured reasoning! IT was all her fault, Misako's FAULT I found myself invisible to them. I screamed some more at the new sight of everyone leaving us alone. AAARRRRHHH!

No one seemed to notice plain old me, except for my arch-enemy. But she didn't count anyway, no one was accounted for on my piority list. I tried to laugh in the face of danger, but what little common sense I had faded away... to be replaced by terror of the unknown, Was this a punishment? For what I attempted? I looked towards her in pure rage, I tried to avoid seeing the scenario of my (ugh, not possible!) demise, but it was burnt into my subconsciousness forever. The scene replayed itself once more. I was CERTAIN she was controlling everything I saw.

"Does it even matter how much pain you've caused?" I gave her a twisted smile, "Nice try, but I'm not even human, or humane, nothing can touch my exterior." I answered her proudly, big mistake. Biggest mistake ever made of my 'life'. She smiled back and my... my body seemed to have froze in shock... or possibly terror, except for the constant bzzts pulsating inside me. It seemed to be counting towards something inexplicable.

"We'll see," she stated softly, as if wrathfully anticipating this reply. "We'll see indeed," I had a feeling I was gonna regret this for the rest of... I fainted directly on the spot, but she had

caught me deftly. Relief filled me for a brief moment, at least Koko... Heck, she REMEMBERED my legacy. but it was nothing, NOTHING to what happened next. Unconscious I hung down like a rag-doll, but... I was still aware! I could still sense everything that was happening to me, but... Impossible! This has got to be some sick joke. I couldn't move a muscle, not lift a manicured finger, as stiff as a statue. State of mind? Understatement, I could still feel nothing. My chest lurched with the sense of foreboding. I felt... my pride fall away, to be replaced by scared for my own safety. How was she going to deal with poor me? Her 'murderer'? Because, SHE knew every Shigu I committed! She knew how I killed in cold-blood. Oh, how the bastard planned well the tortures meant for me!

"I bet this will hurt you more than it did to me," Misako whispers savagely, hearing every chilling word being expelled from her breath. I could laugh timidly, but the sound died away so quickly. I tried to scream so many expletives, but in my mind I only shriek. Every sound faded away, but all I could hear was the constant bzzt. Bzzt, bzzt. For the first time I was terrified of her, I knew what terror was, it was so subtle. Fear itself was the catalyst, but my biggest fear? Magic and mana. She seemed to know.

I felt the hollowed out area of the ice-cold hand print congeal as my own skin... closed up, sealing the oozing opening. I squeamishly felt sick, the sight of my own flesh and organs healing over her obstructive hand. I closed my eyes, thankfully. The numbness I associated with normally feeling pain made it even worse. I expected a sharp twinge every time she touched an artery. I felt her brush aside a thick tendon, it made a dull squelching sound as she shoved. I could hear everything. I felt faint, as though everything was far away. But still it continued, she continued delving longer, I could feel my other organs pulsate warmly against her hand as they slid wetly over it to occupy the remaining space left over. Something inside me snapped sharply, I shivered at this. I felt her scraping nails puncture my cervical cord, liquid splurged inside. To my horror, I sensed that the cord soon stopped trickling vital fluids, effectively trapping her fisting slender hand inside core of my chest. NO! NOOOOO! Even in Limbo I still had my healing abilities?! This truly is KElf! Tried to resist the sudden feeling to throw up at this revelation. Unfortunately, I had no longer the capabilities to do anything for now. Only waiting. Only the terrible waiting.

Visibly I felt like my inner-veins frayed, those arteries should burst. My chest heaved, I was trying to clear those images from my mind. But to my disgust, I felt a sharp twitch and those split ends healed. Good lord, I awaited the inevitable. I felt them connect once again, wrapping themselves AROUND Misako's hand in the process.

The curvature of my back should stop her! The hand felt slick, intrusive, chilling, and there was nothing I could do to prevent this. I felt like I was completely at her mercy! "Rosia, you're not enjoying this one bit, are you," she stated emotionlessly, wace?! How dare she intruded on my personal space! I wanted to roar, but then she leant down and dryly whispered, "I won't forgive you for what you did to us! Least of all me." It sounded as harsh as dried husk of leaves.

I was under her 'spell', all I saw was her small wonderful-hued eyes glint, they quite took my breath away. But it was pride for myself that forced me not to admit that to her...

I love her, and I still did, even after all this she put me into! Even after all the... I realised pitifully. My absolute jealousy trailed off, for a minute I wanted to blame her but... My mind

stopped rationalising with usual pride. No, in the end I couldn't blame her due to my valid insecurities. However I deserved any punishment she dished out to me, even if Vixen was her main priority. I just couldn't bring myself to care what she thought of me in reality. I never asked her - She viewed me as an antagonist, or just a fucking plain selfish... self-centred lady.

For a moment I thought I was floating, but then 'reality' came back with a devastating crash. For a deluded moment, I saw velvet of her cloak rising up, wings of vengeance flitting against her back. The vision suited her, but in my delirium that soon resulted - I viewed Koko as an angel. If such an angel carried a sword. Blurrily, I soon felt her hand press against my... oh... Kelf, no! I winced inwardly as I once again tried to deny what I was feeling, such random confusion spawned.

I wanted to scream, to yell. Anything was better! Deftly, I felt something large lodge inside my chest, tunneling deeper... Oh geez, this was beyond terror! Lorithia! What was she doing?! My body lurched in her tight arms, her touch felt as cold as ice. Colder in fact, My skin felt as insubstantial as cotton, I couldn't even feel myself think.

"You broke my hearts," I felt her hand close around the largish organ and gave it a direct squeeze, "Just as I did to yours, but it shouldn't matter, not to you. You're already senseless from the pain you've caused everyone. You should know better," Blood seemed to rush to my head and almost instantly pain filled me, such inexplicable undecipherable pain! Stars exploded behind my eyes. It was a love so intense for that male she 'raised' as well as Devil. And that fucking Vixen that she regarded as her 'true' partner in her life. And I was paying for every hour of pain I caused her.

"But you are such a *heartless* person, your pleasure is derived from causing others' pain. It's your sole source of fucking entertainment," "So how does it feel like to be on the other side for a change? You've left my body decomposing at the bottom of a fucking lake!" adds Misako, fingering around... immediately, the pain reactors kicked back and flooded me.

"That's not possible, you should've begged," Misako adds in confusion, "With a heart you're heartless - but without a heart, you're even more heartless than before." I grabbed her arm forcefully, preventing her from moving it any more than necessary. "I don't regret sending you to Kelf, not anymore!" I stated aloud, the porcelain vase shattered. "And evermore your friends are doomed." "Since this is eternal Kelf, and we're in this together, it's not only my Kelf," I sneered at her, "It's your tormented Kelf too." Misako looked even more tortured at this information. "You never did ask what the Master did to me did you?" I continued onwards, the cloaked figure was disturbed by what I was saying.

"You knew I was an agent of the Shadowscythe," I laughed darkly, "But wace you didn't know was that back when I was an innocent Hero newly recruited in the Shadowscythe ranks, my Master came for me," Bzzt, bzzt. "The Queen of Monsters gave me orders and I obeyed as her puppet. But she did something remarkable few entities could do," My eyes gleamed manically at this, "She therefore infused me with the incarnation of DOOOM." Misako almost dropped the jar. "As long as DOOM exists, the cycle of Dakittu always continues, and you never truly defeated me."

"Not for a second, I believed that your friends admired me for what I am," I snarled in her face, "In fact, they're even worse!" A fate worse than death- For all her friends, but then who was I to judge. What better way to punish each of her friends? Than an ironic *reminder* of their worst sins in their next lives? And continuing their life even after they've forgotten what their purpose was? I burst out laughing. "The wheel of Dakittu already started rolling,"

"You're a monster," Misako started trembling at this, "You couldn't do that to everyone in the entire galaxy,"

I only laughed back and she clutched the jar in fear, "Alas, their fates are sealed, but we're together," I taunted her back, "Isn't it all that matters?" She lashed out at me, and I ducked out of the way. I couldn't stop staring at her fiery sapphire eyes hurt with pain and longing. "I admire you for what you are, naive and insensible and compassionate, you assist others. You're the hole no Dakittu could fill," I whispered back, "And you complete me, only completed me as an integral part," My eyes flash viciously, "But that doesn't mean that Doom can't change your perspective."

She stumbled back, terrified at this revelation, "And just think," I cooed softly, "We could spend rest of eternity here, wallowing in self-depravation, but we'll never be separated." It was Misako's expression that stopped me from carrying out my threat, I paused for a moment. I loved her so, but was it... necessary to have a 'heart' to do this? Or was it part of my selfish desires once again that she saw, the outside?

"I've noticed that your antennae only show when you're... attracted to someone, hmm?" I whispered, fondling her two thick tubers that hung delicately at her shoulders. They felt fuzzy to the touch, they hung almost delicate and reed-like. They reminded me of roots, "or to be more precise, when you're aroused by passion, Koko, my pheohan."

My eyes flashed with scorn and almost yearning desire to be more 'intimate' with her. I touched them and she backed quickly away from me. Misako's expression betrayed her thoughts, she seemed scalded by my accusations. Levelled her eyes unblinkingly at mine. She seemed slightly cattish, neutral lips became lifted upon an refreshingly innocent face.

"I-I'm not aroused by you," she stuttered before her eyes flashing at everything I told her hit her all at once, I felt like an observer as I leant towards her cloak. This cloak... Hid her insecurities, tear that away from her and the Oeyken was... Disarmed. The breeze caught the hem and in a swift moment I tore the remainder of velvet material away from her.

Her expression fragile with recognition changed into a primal almost savage anger in useless defiance. I lunged for her, in a manner of a Terra lioness stalking its prey. It was an almost familiar cycle we were in right now: Cat and mouse, all compassing night surrounding the frozen dawn. My Dakittu was natural as breathing for me, but at the moment my desires carried more weight upon my own thoughts. I needed her for my Master's plans. And in a way, I knew she 'wanted' me in some obscure way. Untamed yet vicious, no-one could tame the primitive nature of their own instincts. I should know, I chanted softly, I've been at the pinnacle of Kelf myself. And in Kelf... Anything goes. And there are no rules, only the encroaching sin encompasses the mind. The true predator within, always there and hungering for more.

"Stay- Stay AWAY from me, Rosia!" She roared, "Even in Kelf you're like this..."

Unrecognisable, almost inhuman beast of a lady! You never change..." She growls lowly at my preceeding actions, it stopped me in my tracks. "You never change AT ALL." Hearing her calm voice shook me out of my lewd desires - as a milisecond later I felt the frigid air rush

past me. A whiplash resounded sharply against my ears as it cracked loudly. The sound snapped my concentration, and I could hear myself panting heavily. I briefly retained my logical sense. Blood rushed to my head once again and I heard her with absolute clarity: "I thought that alone would stop you," Misako said coldly as she withdrew a shadowy-whip into her cloak, "And I was right." Though I did notice that her cloak was back on. "Right about what?" I smirked condescendingly at this remark, "Right about us?" Her cheeks flushed at this as she hung in midair on the very edge of an unearthed gravestone.

"No," she spoke with absolute longing. I was sure as kelf that this wasn't referring to me. No way in KELF was she referring to me! Inwardly I scowled at this act, BASTARD! "You messed with everyone's lives, Rosia. Ever since you got involved with my case, disaster loomed," Misako's lower-lip trembled with ultimate sorrow. I felt furious with her. She was pinning the blame on me, the one who admired such compassion! Such dignity! Empty air rushed into my chest again as I touched where my... Only emptiness filled the void as I felt my own shattered ribs curled in, smeared with transparent blood. My blood. Tears of wrathful anger ran down my face, against the person I admired so.

The sound of my own voice roared out at her, "Koko!" I managed to leap up to her, grasping her from behind.

Within one bound I was onto her. Her back pressed firmly against mine, she heaved as I overpowered her. Heh, even as a goddamn spirit she was weak. Weaker than I expected. "Rosia! NO! NO! You've already killed me once. During your torturing!" She squeaked as she clung onto the jar. For a moment Koko had lost her voice. She seemed feeble, but it would be a bizarre sight for everyone... If they could SEE us. I grabbed the shadow-whip and unfurled it from her cloak of Dakittu. *Filchew!* The shadow comprised element made a obnoxious snapping sound as I undid it. I felt dizzy as I continued. Her 'breaths' sounded heavy as I mounted the gravestone. "Firking," she swore softly at what I was doing. Her corse-like spirit languished at the side of the gravestone, painfully resisting. "You said it, Koko." I snidely replied, as I removed her cloak, "Too weak? Too subtle?" The tip of the whip caught then wrapped around Koko's neck and I pulled on it - hard.

"Nnngh!" Misako responded, desperately trying to say something, I pulled on it even harder. So wanted to suck the life out of her. Metaphorically speaking. She seemed to whimper softly even as I spun her around with the whip, forcing us in an awkward embrace. "Don't want to spend Kelf with you," she muttered softly as she walked away. Insolence! I clutched the whip and pulled her along with the rest of it. It made a direct snap sound and she was flung off her feet, crashing to the floor. Luckily we weren't flesh and blood. "Too weak without your precious energy blade?" I finished the rest of my sentence as I pushed my nose onto her mouth, "You left it with Diaglo, didn't you." She winced at this as my maneuver seemed to hurt, I did know my own strength. Heck, I even threw a desk at Harlin and he didn't even complain... Okay, he DID. My nose must have felt like a wedge.

I whipped out my sharp insicior and Misako withdrew as I scraped it against the softness of her cheek. "Oh did I hurt you?" I grinned devillishy, "My bad, that must have been an accident" I spoke lightly and nudged her oozing cut lip. She nurses it, blood pooled inside her mouth as I yanked the tightening cord upwards. Thrusting my mouth towards her, I poured all my current anger, my frustrations and all my damned emotions into that punishing kiss,

throwing my arms across her slender neck to barricade her escape. I tasted the strong thick coppery taste of the sanguine liquid flow against my tongue, I ran my tongue against my upper lip as I flicked drops. It wasn't clear even to me what the heck was happening. At this action, I felt it flowing from my lips and it wasn't until I felt her gasp that I endured this raptuous experience. Something liquid began to lodge in her throat as I continued the procedure. She shudders at this, even as I pressed her shoulders against me. I could hear her thoughts at this point, she wasn't... In the least bit courageous!

"If you scratched, did I not bleed? But if I whipped you, you plead?" I murmured.

In fact, as she railed against this onslaught, her own body was helpless to resist. Misako presses her smooth hands against my chest, even as I forced her neck to tilt backwards as I stood up, shortening the whip's length as I went so that our pressed lips remained connected. As I tilted her head back even more than believed possible, I heard a strangled low scream expel from her whimpering mouth. I smiled savagely before continuing. I could hear a nauseated grinding crack as her neck-bone breaks, but somehow no injuries apparent. Laugh, all ye who averts misfortunes! Look at the state of you, who are no more a lady than someone who is strung by the strings of fate! A fate engineered by me!

Subconsciously I was making her one with the Dakittu. Just as the Queen of Monsters did to me so long ago. The jar shook wildly at each thrust I made. Something poured from the depths of my soul as her sorrowful eyes flickers and widens, I felt her heaving groans as I continued this forced embrace, my very arms ached as I continued our contact. I felt almost dizzy as I close my eyes momentarily. All I could see was blackness as I felt Misako's hands grasp me, as her throat tightens as I continued (well) strangling her. Her body against me. I imagined the mists condensing as the darkness seeps deeper, in my mind I felt my consciousness being transferred to another form as my POV shifts. Well, that was a convience... I thought woozily, even as I continued my deed.

Unaware of anything else but the throbbing darkness, all I felt around me was moistness, the surrounding intense warmth spreading around my (what?!) new liquid form, even as I descended, the steady rise-and-fall as the paper-thin softness penetrated me. This was bizzare, so weird even to what I was used to by now. Squeezed by tightness all around I heard whistles akin to faint air rushing through gills, as if something was... wait a minute, I recognised that. Screeching sounds of strangling as if someone ground a rock against iron. The softness started trembling as if she was shocked. Everything now seemed tilted, as I was forced to question whether this experience was all in my mind? However, the softened surface soon shifted onto something hard with the texture of a smoothed drain-pipe lined with tiny sharp fangs, felt cool and abrasive as it scraped, but undetered I coated it with a moistened layer (ok, weirder!). Some of my essence went into a small pouch. I didn't care though, she was a firking bastard and deserved this experience, no matter how... Didn't know what it must have felt like to her, but as I progressed, intense pressure .

I seemed to have snapped back to reality, aware once again as I felt my hands fall limp, exhausted at the deed - I could see once again as clear as day while I let the taut whip hang loose by my side, coiled against the granite floor. I acknowledged Misako who seemed to have expression of stark realisation. At what could pass as disgust, it was as though I poured acid down her throat. Cold sweat trickled down our locks of hair, mingled together clammy and wet. As inseperable. I admired how time passed slowly, she didn't notice my smug

expression, I knew exactly what she was going through. However, I noticed that in the intensity of the situation, that her hand was clutching... Her cloak.

My Dakittu had passed into its new home, but my soul was still of the darkness - darkness that will never be set free from its confines. "My chest... felt on fire," she murmurs hoarsely, wincing at this. "On fire." The lady sounded very numb and absymal. Without a word, dear Misako manages to let go of the jar and I petted her on the head. Her wispy hair felt like feathery down, the sort you'd find on birds. My shaking lips brushed hers tenderly, as she looked forlorn in her angst. My lips still secreted the same dark liquid, as I tussled her green hair, the strands falling through my outstretched fingers and she stared up skywards. My saliva pooled down as her searching eyes glimpsed my face and narrowed. Finally, the two events clicked together. A scowl answered. I didn't even have time to dodge as she slapped me. The pain sharp upon my reddened cheeks, I winced and held my face. "Wace! What was that for?" she asked.

"Your soul now belongs to the Master, who was waiting for this opportunity to arrive." I smirked, "who shall do with you as it wishes." Misako's face blanched at this. "WACE?" she managed to throw scorn into her careful words, "Rosia, release me from those bounds!" She begged of me, pleading and weeding at this due revelation. As she wept, whether from anger or sadness, I couldn't tell because of her dewy tears streaming down. I forced her into a position suiting of me, her tense hands still gripped mine tightly in shock.

"Lost your words?" I responded snidely, "Come now, you wretched incorrigible sweet soul, show your innermost thoughts to me." Her eyes flickered open in a blaze of scarlet orange, she thrust her hands away from mine as she gritted her teeth. "You're an evil, evil person, you know that Rosia!" Misako responded, "There's no redemption for either of us after what I've..." she trailed off. words faded away as her secret memories filled with her own hidden Dakittu revealed itself to me. She started sobbing, tears continuously pouring down, darkening the stone-cold grave. My ice-cold one, I shivered involuntarily upon seeing the horrendous sight.

'Hello?' As I delved further into the mists, I heard a distinct chime. and a corridor lined with jet tiles opened towards me. 'Ah, Koko probably wasn't expecting this breach of privacy... Or should I say, intrusion!' I responded, smirking as the narrow corridor due to the trick of the light seemed to widen. Every step I took left a slight ripple of a print upon its hardened surface, defying physics. 'I can hear you,' responds a very loud familiar voice, as though shocked at the lack of privacy, it enmated from the narrow walls, lined with refractive ice so clear. 'I-I-I can't - if you have any firkin' idea of...' I looked around for the main source, but the room was void of any physical presence, save for a deep singular oppressive emotion I kept sensing. The room's dimension seemed to shift around occasionally, as if animated by an unseen force, as if my own perspective became disorientated. I associated this action with visible shaking. 'Dear Loritha,' responded the voice, 'This shouldn't have... become possible,' Misako sounded calm, but the flat tone betrayed her emotions, that raised a notch as she fully realised the situation currently. 'GET OUT! Please, Rosia!' she wailed, 'If you knew impurity of your-' I shut her pathetic complaints out mentally, but I sensed a shield around her logic. She was hiding something from me, gonna find out! 'I don't want you to intrude... any further!'

Misako's POV: circa 3009+ AD

"The hand of the visitor shall awaken the Sleeper and bring doom down from beyond those

darkened stars."

I've heard of such strange mythos, but that's was why I was sent rather belatedly from the Solunanian offices to the farthest outpost of the Westion desert, the local Sheriff deputy had sent an urgent telegram communicating his emotional outburst at the mining going on below ground. He believed that the Shadowscythes were up to little good, under the commands of none other than their reinstated General, Vladmire Valoth. And to make those yet unfamiliar things such as the terror of planetary invasion even more complicated... The Scythes rigged those infested underground mines to automatically cave in, trapping whoever ventures further inside those labrynthine depths. Carefully concealing the targeting equipment near the entrance while theoretically triggering explosions that send destabilising tremors throughout the desert planet. I had NO idea why they chose me, was it just random?

Was it just luck, the roll of the dice? I still smarted from the events of last year, the murder of Vixen still fresh on my mind, but I tried to take my mind off by participating in some other activities. But nothing worked, or at least those measures were temporary, but even I had noticed that I kinda caved into this repetitive pattern of emotions that were so distraught, almost drowning in my pure and utter sorrow. I had failed to protect my friends, I had caught Harlinique, at last behind those safe iron bars of his secured jail under lock and key. But at what cost to my own dignity? I caught a glimpse at dear Devi's clear eyes weeks ago, they appeared to be worried, as if he was urging me to take one long hard look at what I'd become, but protecting was my duty. I shall go where I was sent, no matter if it was hard or not, I slowly hardened under this demanding circumstance.

Emotions started neglecting me the moment I took up the offer the Sheriff made, it was an offer too good to be true. A new start, a new era? It was a job requirement needed, but I hoped that Vixen would care. But she... was gone. I just couldn't let go. A sudden but brief rush of inhibited anger filled me at the thought of Rosia's betrayal, I was supposed to be her friend, her comrade and partner, but she turned so quickly to a dark path of utter and irredeemable acts. The firkin' backstabbing lady she was (and to think that I was as the innocent fowers of youth.) She was attractive, but I could see her sins as clear as neon-lights. All I could see was red, but this soon died down as I waved nolanchantly to Devi. He took me aside, as if in disbelief at everything that happened in the space of three milliseconds. My best friend stared me down sternly, not knowing if this was the last I'd see of him again, but his gaze softened as he placed his rough hand upon my face.

"Go with them, to avenge injustice," Devi urged softly. he must be thinking of his sister. He may be a Martin, but he sure knew how to vocalise his thoughts simply. I blushed, but then Devlin parted away from me, not looking back even as I dragged along by the Sheriff. I thought I saw water streak down his ashen face, one of indirect regret and disgrace. I wanted him to smile, to reassure me he was gonna be fine without me. "Farewell, dearest Devlin. May Lorithia smile upon you." Devi didn't hear that, but he turned to me as though the grateful jovial expression he held assured me that he did. As if his lone heart was about to break into many pieces just then.

It was then that there was a sudden rush as the Scythe's mecha savagely rammed into my Fugent Eagle, it was so unexpected, I instinctively braced for the shattering impact. Everything seemed to flare up and become an inferno of twisted metal and scalding oil. It was as if the whole world was set ablaze as I could hear my short breaths, even as I pathetically

crawled from the literal burning wreckage of my huge robot. Its transparent energy wings flickered and still shielded me from the brunt of the overhead enemy. I should've been done for, why I still remained? Still experiencing through this whole kelfhole? Through blurred eyes, I struggled to remain conscious. The huge robot cheers for my loss, still raising its twin oversized blades in apparent victory as it literally cleaved my mecha into many pieces, shards of metal rained down from the roof of the cave. I never felt so exhausted, too much smoke inhalation I guess? I started to falter just as I felt someone's slender hand grab onto my uniform tensely. The alien tried to drag me out of the wreckage, I tried to protest, but piercing hawk-like golden eyes of a stern dark-haired elegant lady met mine.

"Hail, the forsaken protector of the Vulkarims, long shall you serve justices unleashed upon reigning Chaos. Routes of their connected past never strayed from its circular origin, always looping for eternity due to your enemy's actions. Long shall you bring stability to Swordhaven and beyond. Reclaim your own destiny even before our time began, as we'd suffered even before the universe had shattered." she whispered before I fell into darkness.

When I reawoke, the lady was standing over me, regal and stern. She bent down as if in sympathy, I noticed that she spread an ointment liberally over my burning shoulders. Pain radiated up my side, I couldn't resist a wince because when I moved my joints they also twinged with agony. "Please don't try to talk," Tikala added gently even as I gritted my teeth with each healing rub, "it saves time." She touched my long feelers. She started running her fingers over the texture, felt the light touch and I shivered with delight upon this action. I must've looked a wreck - as if the mecha had run me over in its insatiable fury. I looked singed to a crisp, even my arms felt as though they were flayed as if the mecha took its vengeance upon my branded skin.

"I'm the Tikala, main healer of the Horse tribe," the Tikala introduced to me, her voice echoing slightly, "Valoth believes that you were killed as the caves had collapsed. He had received the news that you're pronounced as 'vanished'. He had sent the notice out to everyone prior to this discovery in your local city," I took a literal double take as I stared wide, huh? Vanished, Me? It took time to sink in, I couldn't go back to my previous life. Ever.

"You mean, that persistent pest Misako who resisted us... Vanished under dire circumstances?" Valoth couldn't believe this, it was better than he expected. The skulled horned leader with the flaming energised horns grinned wickedly as it plotted, "With that Neosephrim out of the way, the invasion of Westion goes forth! If we're lucky in a few years time, then we'll ravage Soluna City!" Back in Soluna City, poor Devlin cried as he heard the news Valoth had declared in ignorance of the true events, and the Martin announced his sorrow to Diaglo upon hearing this unexpected news.

"Misako Irwa, you're considered as the new protector of our Vuul'karim tribe, the Vultures of the Feyrstaurm plains are forever in your debt for your favour towards them which they've bestowed." I looked away, still trying to recover from still lingering doubts that ensured after what the Tikala revealed. I buried my still bashful face in my arms, how could I describe the conflicting feelings that washed over me? "I am no protector, even at my last employment. I couldn't even protect my friends, shield them from the influence of corruption." I murmured softly, as the Tikala just shook its headress. I secretly despaired over how everyone would go on without me. In vain I even tried to visualise Devi cheerfully going about his business, but

the vision faded. I was just too distraught. But the Tikala still awaited patiently, she was persistent even as I denied what the healer told me. I was unworthy of her praises, I didn't deserve this. Crystalline tears pooled down my parched face and left drops, sizzling in the desert heat. I felt like a failure, an utter failure because my own friends reap my mistake. I never should've left the office that day, never should've listened to that Rosia. "Your path is not set in stone, Koko." the Tikala admitted softly, guessing what was on my mind. I winced in surprise, she knew my nickname though I never told her? Wowzers.

"If you could at least help me? Where shall I go from there?" I responded somewhat neutrally, the Tikala just spread her tanned arms to the scorched endless horizon, I viewed her as trying to act cynical, but then the Tikala turned to me and regarded me. For a Westion, she seemed to have knowledge compassing centuries. "Hide out in Westion desert," she said loftily, "Train with me in the ways of the cloaked nomad of the Shifting Sands, as guide you to learn self-reliance. So you in turn become diligent and swift of hand, masking those that once knew purity. Those skills will call you back to your former glory when time is required." What other choice did I have? Suffer at the hands of Valoth or endure the intense training that Tikala had given out? "Reclaim your new identify, from henceforth, though you may not be the visitor foretold in prophecy, you shall instead be our victor, so that you'll forge a new title." Tikala spoke gently as my endless tears came pouring I had no choice... down, soaking the ground in unredemption. So much tears, but they were no good, they were useless in the circumstances. I timidly nodded, in the stifling heart of the barren plains, I therefore resigned to my fate. The healer reached out a sturdy 'hand' towards me, calloused with the heat of the sun overhead, radiating a faint hue of cast vermillon. "Arise, Triseula Aurelius, through the Sleeper's will you shall triumph in thou Dakittu. For the elements have chosen you as our Chosen-One!" I accepted the hand

"This dreamscape, Larosin Fin-Schaets, is not as it seems. Cleverly enacted by the one you tormented, this current punishment is the subtle remnants of your 'dying-dream', the final throes upon which you attempted to make everyone suffer for your penalty. And the undeniable proof Koko demonstrated to me about your pride, is enough proof of your eternal damnation. You are not dead, yet you still believe you were- up until she revealed the entire truth about your situation."

"I played my part well," Misako added as horror began to dawn on my face, her eyes were mischeviously glinting in my direction, "I'm not the only one who can plan ahead Rosia, The One allowed me to communicate within your current dream, a non-physical representation noneless but one that is real enough to fool you. I presented the illusion of your own funeral to break you, but you lashed out." I smiled a bit, Koko was clever but I denied the bashful thought.

"I allowed you to further 'toy' with me, to present the illusion of power that proved irresistible to you, I faked my tears to see if you showed compassion for me. But you showed neither. So I had no choice but to do the worst I could ever do, but Rosia still thinks she is untouchable. If that is indeed your name?" she adds delicately in my direction.

I secretly seethed at all this, she set me up once again! "Don't be mistaken, you definately drowned me, and I am condemned by your immoral actions in the real world. But I had the upper hand all along in the vestige of your dream, a twisted manifestation that shows the reality of your current situation: you are dying, Larosin. Your twisted and wretched dream is about to come to an end and draws to its close... Permenently."

"For your own life at least, but that doesn't mean your mortal deeds will go unpunished in your nearing afterlife," The beast finished her sentence. The floor seemed to drop below my feet as The One locked its ghastly eyes on me.

"But you've also corrupted me, and I clearly can't enter the other realm on my own, so it looks like I'm stuck with this hell-guardian for company- for what seems like eternity, unless I ask your Master for my impending release from her binds... How ironic," she mutters before turning to the One.

"It is rather interesting seeing you two try to torture each other with complex mind-games, trying to twist reality's fabric. The whole scenario is but a sport to me, I laugh at your futile bizarre attempts to grasp things as they are." The One spoke as the hairs at the back of my neck began to feel clammy at the impossible explanation. My skin startled to prickle unpleasantly, if this whole situation was a dream, it sure seemed like one that was a nightmare, but what happened in the physical world? Where was my real body? Was it still underneath that column, knocked unconscious "Because of your unspeakable acts, Larosin Fin-Schaets, your current punishment is only a fraction of what'll hell will be like when it finally awaits." The One threatened, its mouth opening and I could see the brimstone teeth displayed, as each incisor curved inwards wickedly. It reared upwards. I blanched at this. This sight brought back another memory, one that I longed not to endure any longer. One that persisted when I was a innocent bystander to the things Harlin partaked in due course. A slight twinge ran through my shattered mind, causing me to fall to my knees, the fragmented image tortured me.

Rosalina couldn't believe her eyes. out there splayed on the table, Harlin inspected his golden-haired bounty, thin lashes wavered before the cobalt eyes belonging to the person sprang to open by some unseen force. The stilled lips belonging to the lady wettened briefly before they quivered to life. Everything happened in slow motion, as if she was watching an old Hologram. Harlin laughed with unadulterated joy, in disbelief at what had transpired, he started to caress the innocent splayed carcass fondly. But she remained hidden, even as the bold Replica moved in one sinuous movement, the hair alone swept the table. "Garnet," Harlin spoke quite softly though not to her, it was reserved for another, "Garnet," he persisted, moving in even as Garnet accepted the movement. It... It was his chosen name for the replica? How dare he, that Alvenos? He continued fondling Garnet in all the wrong places, and Rosalina felt physically sick at this notion. Her hearts started 'shattering' one by one, and she restrained from expressing her anger, until at last she let her emotions out in a wrenching roar. Harlin looked up from his expedition of Garnet's form and glided to the doorway. "Did you still love me, bold Rosalina that became fair? The one who you oft flowered my hair?" Harlin paused, "Darkest auburn brown - which I beheld as your crown, until now?"

"Rosalina," The One spoke, cutting through my fear as cutting-edge glass, "repent!" Wace? Why?! I was no longer coherent through my sobs, I couldn't manage to face up to reality. Yet, still I raised my head proudly despite my anger, despite my fury. I leveled my gaze at it and still spoke my damnation. My mind still tortured by past offenses, my life seemed to flash before my view. "No!" I denied, and Misako's ghastly eyes lowered then glared with hidden anguish. "Then shall you be forever damned." she whispered cautiously, "Send her back to the other Realm," she commanded the garish beast guardian of the Hell-Spawn, her eyes were glinting with admonishment, "Let her be, to reap henceforth the unpaid consequences."

My mouth was left open, as I retorted, "Wait, Koko... You've got the wrong idea," Her sterling eyes glimmered, "Oh I have, had I? Then explain your actions." Reciporate my actions in front of her? HOW dare she?! I secretly growled and gritted my teeth, "You'll never get an apology from me, not in a million years. Nor a badass explanation, theorise all you want." Misako looked composed, but I could tell she was fuming at my reply. "If you'll ever learn, at least be civil in your answer."

"My name, is Rayne. Funny, I don't recall how I ventured here," smiled the green haired cherub-cheeked male. "I think I wandered along the way," he chuckled. "I assumed I gambled most of my Dragon-coins at the Lucky Chance Convention, into a decent meadow." He was, as I learnt, perpetually poor. I met that poor simple folk while Rayne was knocking for alms and sores of foot, every person who answered slammed the door in his dimly confused face. Of course, all he wanted was an accomodation to call his own. That atrociously fortunated male couldn't even afford an effing house so he was constantly travelling to various slums in the district, only to learn they were loaned only to Dragonlords. Pushing his luck...

"I need a place to call my own," he pestered me as I wiped the molten blood off an unluckly slaughtered dragon. I had a low opinon of lowlifes, but I let him ramble on, ignoring most of the details he provided. "So," I began haughtily, "If you're so supplied with alms, why don't you just fall off a cliff?" Rayne looked bashful, "What grateful ideas too- I might just do that!" That supreme dolt doesn't even know the definition of sarcasm. I might juuust spare him within an inch of his pathetic life. If he didn't cross the line between my sanity or reason.

"Sigh- Firk- I mean fine. You'll stay with me. In this badly constructed tent for a rent, almost quaint, ain't it. But don't you dare compare us to being room-mates" I glared at Rayne disparagingly. He shrugged and laughed, "What harm could there be,"

As I sat huddled in my tattered tent, I considered it fortunate that Rayne never questioned my motives. Or just how I obtained that slightly raw steak that arrived shortly after dusk descended, and was now roasting on a hastily prepared fire. Nor how I sustained myself on a daily basis. It was for his benefit, not mine. Rayne heistated slightly but I gestured towards him, inviting him to take a bite, in a flattering and superlative way. A sweep of my preened hair still dangling, I observed that he left some leftover raw scraps. "Go ahead, have some." Rayne urged, but I feigned ignorance of the customs of the Falconreachers as they were called. I scowled and took the best bits for myself, noting in respite how I detested the cooked parts. "I'll be away shortly. On a brief mission" I commanded, ready to go out on my nightly sordid prow around the desolate border.

Some matters were left unsaid, I considered as I fell upon the still kicking haunches of a potential prey. Careful not to sever the ankle's tendon, I vertically sliced into the thickly-scaled abdomenon, narrowly avoiding a swift swipe from the dragon's razored talon. but my bloodlust was satiated by the sight of the prize awaiting. My fury slowly abated, to be replaced by an almost abjected neccessity. I felt my pupils dilated to tiny prinpricks barely discernable from the dim dusk's distinct auroa. The sheen of the dragon's hide reflected off my glinting Axe. I discarded the axe that witnessed countless carnage. I had no need of it. I drew pleasure from this 'method' of my hobby, but at the same time others (such as Rayne, the wimp) would be purely disgusted by the sordid details. No Dakittu could truly describe the next scenes that followed shortly afterwards. But when the hunt was finished, my Dakittu was satisfied as shortly refuelled by taking the life of another adult Dragon. The remains of slained hunt lay at

my feet, the haunches and ragged entrails all that were left. I sensed I was being watched.

I quickly leapt aside, refuelled by the source that once empowered its sole oppressor. *What in the blazes of firking Nusengard!* I hissed, flaring my cape. THAT which I cannot allow! If it was Koko, I swear I will slay her on the spot. Figuratively, but such was my anger. A bush softly moved, I tensed up feeling the intensity well within my hollow mind. I raised my axe to bring it down, but the hedge continued to rustle continuously, I pricked my ears inconsequentially. It was surely another prey to easily capture with my bare hands. To strangle? I careth not. All I knew was that my body thirsted for needless slaughter, I felt it grow rigid with unpitiful longing. A long drawn out hiss escaped my frosted lips, as I readied my axe and reached out for its sturdy yet dependable handle. I awaited with the fiery patience of a flaring firecracker ready to be alit with glory. I waited, licking my metaphorical wounds. It was near...

I could feel the excitement in my nerves mounting, already singing with a kind of jubilation. I released the trigger. "YAH! By the skull of Eldron the Good!" I swung around on the spot, sweeping the axe through the shrubbery as it struck a dense and solidly built object and clattered away. The monstosity gave a small yelp. Startled by the meeping sound I released my trusted weapon and it fell into the ground with a heavy thud. I observed the body mildly with eyes that paused whilst unseen, piercing the shadows. It was injured by my action, the creature was small, almost delicate for its dam's girth. A newborn barely a few months old which tottered towards me on broken limbs... It stared at me almost accusingly- as if saying *why did you endeavor to accomplish this?* It cheeped despairingly and my eyes were transfixed. It wasn't because of its draconic origins that I stared... Something glittered in the depths of its milky white pupils. Its indiscriminating eyes were of a startling sapphire hue. I stepped back, some events had surely changed. A role-reversal.

That one dragon, which I sorely wanted to ravage, reminded me too much of- no, almost uncannily- Koko. Even the firking shimmering scales were similar shade of ivy-green common to most hemlock plants. I couldn't. I-I barely couldn't. But my desire was much different from instinct. Too different. My hands started trembling, torn between two ultimate decisions. Either to spare its pathetic life or to be warranted as a cruel and callous Slayer of the Draconic. It had no mother now, a runt fledgling which had barely left the nest. Useless. I could easily dash its neural tissues out, plucked the plucky and minute dragon from its dam's side, letting it loll between my... However, I didn't. The Dakittu was too painful to admit to myself, but... For once I actually lived up to my fatalistic word. The dragon was fragile, but not well-mannered, determined. It sniffed at my fingers curiously, as it made contact, licking up the lifeblood of its dam, the scent wafting across its simplistic imprinted mind. Cooling, almost repungent but I let my fingers roam across its flaked scales. Rubbing the flying raptor between the nubs of its crafted armour. Forbidden fruit, I knew its kind well. I studied every aspect. All the wartorn history of Draco Earthen Majoris was known to me. As much as I disliked Draconics, I also admired them in a subtle way. Know thy enemy. It was... Nippy. It nibbled at my fingers, drawing blood with its laced stubs of fangs, grey gums showing through.

I gazed into its naive eyes and knew. It was... Quaint, I could never slay such a magnificent infant such as this. Adult Draconics I brutally slayed, but infants were often released back into wilderness. Only for the vicious cycle to begin once more. I knew this grim fact well. Part of legacy, part of inbred pain. Besides- this baby was too sickently adorable. Sparing its life, I left the tiny raptor where it overlooked its aerial nest. The raptor feigned for protection, pleading with me. I avoided its bright eyes, would easily perish anyway exposed to wintery climate. The

snow was pouring down in heaps. I could see the ragged flesh on its bones. The infant insisted. A look which would melt stone hearts. Glance. Scrabbled on the rubble. Finally I gave in. Wace. It wasn't as if Slayer Galanoth knew. He would have thought I was going soft in my seemingly endless lifespan. But I laid with the freezing raptor. A lioness which slept with a gazelle. How dramatically ironic, but I had a change of heart for that lone single night. I was sick of jealousy, sick of life. Tired of slaying and for one night, I sought companionship of another. But in my Dakittu, the flame of hatred was never quenched. I longed for Koko, I nearly cried with that knowledge which could never be. Oh, cruel Dakittu.

The next morning the snow had stopped. A fresh blanket of whiteness covered the cliff.